

1918 HUPMOBILE TOURING

1918 Hupmobile Touring Sedan, Series R-1; 5 passenger

Original cost: \$1,250.00

Previous owner: Owner was from Omaha (1972); Bernie and Janice Taulborg Collection

Number made: 9,544 (1918)

Engine, etc.: 4 cyl.; 16.9 hp; 112 in. wheelbase

Hupp Motor Car Company, Detroit, Mich.: 1909 – 1941

Hupp Motor Car Co. was founded by Robert Craig Hupp, a former employee of Oldsmobile and Ford, and his brother Louis Hupp.

The company produced its first Hupmobile in 1909. It was introduced to the public as the Hupmobile Model 20 at the 1909 Detroit Automobile Show. It was immediately successful and aided in establishing a company that would flourish for years to come.

The Series R was introduced in 1917. It was a smaller and lighter car and became the company's bread-and-butter vehicle that carried the company into the mid-1920's. Hupmobile established a solid reputation which allowed them to attract good engineers.

Hupmobile moved from a four-cylinder to a straight eight and produced a variety of models. In 1926 the Hupmobile Six was added and Hupp's earnings skyrocketed.

The stylish 1928 model helped the Hupp brothers afford to increase plant capacity by buying the Chandler-Cleveland Corp. of Cleveland and 65,862 Hupmobiles were produced by the end of that year.

Encouraged by these strong sales, Hupp made the mistake of increasing the Hupmobile engine to a 70 hp Six and a 100 hp Eight in the 1930 models – after the stock market crash. Sales dipped 23% but Hupp forged ahead with a 133 hp Eight in an economy that couldn't afford additional gas consumption. The company essentially turned its back on its established clientele in order to pursue a more lucrative market segment.

The company reduced prices on 1931 models but sales continued to plummet. A new model was introduced for 1932 and 10,500 were produced. This did not provide enough cash to make any significant model changes for 1933, but the new 1934 design received public attention and approval.

Tension, a law suit by shareholders, and an attempted hostile takeover of the company in 1935 created a lack of public confidence.

Hupmobile acquired production dies of a Cord design in 1938. In a last attempt for recovery it utilized the striking Cord design for a lower-priced conventional car and introduced the Skylark model. Production delays resulted in only 319 Skylarks being produced. It was not enough to turn things around for the company. (The Skylark's grille later inspired grilles used on Lincoln Continental models in the 1940's.)

By 1940 the company began reorganization under bankruptcy.

The lesson was that car makers needed to build cars that coincided with demands of the economy, not their egos.

The last preserved Hupmobile dealership in the United States is located in Omaha, NE.

Sources: [Standard Catalog of American Cars, 1805 -1942](#). Beverly Rae Kimes, et al. 3rd ed. Krause Publications, 1996.

<http://www.conceptcarz.com/vehicle/z17577/Hupmobile-Series-R.aspx> (1922 Hupmobile)

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<https://www.thehupmobileclub.com/hupmobile-history>
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